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**TWO ESSAYS**

**ON THE**

**SOCIAL SYSTEM**

**OF**

**CHARLES FOURIER,**

**BEING AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE  
FOURIENNE SOCIETY OF NEW-YORK.**

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**FIRST ESSAY.**—A Simple and Succinct Exposition of  
the Theory's Presumptions.

**SECOND ESSAY.**—Mechanical Means, or, The Mode  
of its Organization.

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FIRST ESSAY  
ON  
THE SOCIAL SYSTEM, &c.

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EVIL exists ;—disorder, confusion, suffering ;—to comprise it all in one word—*Evil* has always existed in the respective social combinations handed down to us by history. We except of course from this category, a primitive condition of society into which no evil entered ; but this exception is anterior to known history, and no document or trace can be discovered of such a state in the outward world : yet, it is an exception strongly, ineffaceably, and, I had almost said, instinctively engrafted in the traditions of mankind, and must be taken rather as an imperishable evidence of a consciousness constantly and loudly calling for a futurity in the renewal of the past, than as a chronological fact.

We say that this reminiscence, this idea, this indestructible conviction, no matter by what name it is qualified, is rooted in man's heart, there to act as an evidence of his wanderings in the several social aspects through which he has passed successively, such as his savage, patriarchal, barbarous, and civilized state.

We say that he has but to listen to this voice, instead of stifling it; it is of itself the great Revelation of Providence, which alone can save mankind by delivering them from the evils by which they have hitherto been oppressed. It is the *Logos*, or *Word*, which, as it vehemently demands in us the gratification of a host of desires, passions, and wants, teaches us at the same time that these wants, desires, and passions, are in harmonious relation with our destinies, and that the latter cannot be accomplished without the fulfilment of the former,

The chain of human events has then been broken in its first link, because every thing presented to us by the scroll of history is extrinsic of this chain. Alas! the savage, the patriarchal, the barbarous, and the civilized conditions are all opposed to the destinies of men or adverse to the will of the Deity.

An infernal Iliad of five or six thousand years has glided by, during which period oceans of human blood have been spilt in the name and pretended cause of Truth, Liberty, and Justice, while Truth, Liberty, and Justice, had no interest or influence in the combat. A still more hellish Iliad has been silently consummated in the interior of families, and in the innermost recesses of the heart! How many long-suffering martyrdoms of the heart and soul have been caused by the rigorous, restraining, and prohibitory laws of society, laws which choke every

humanizing revelation in its very cradle ! How many millions of men have been condemned thereby to every variety of privation and suffering, while a small number of chosen favourites have been loaded by that same society with gold, and pampered with wine and luxurious pleasures ! So it is—six thousand years of a topsy-turvy world ! And after the gigantic genius of Vico, in his *principles of a new science*, had become the precursor of a system of *passionate series*, it has required a supernumerary age for the invention of this very system, and its reduction to an exact and perfect science.

Honour to Charles Fourier, the inventor of these *passionate series*, and of the theory of sociality, by means of which the solitary and separate life\* is abolished, and association is established ! Honour to the great master mechanist, whose powerful hand has seized this link shivered from the chain of destiny, a fragment of which is borne by all of us in our heart as a happy relic of the past ; who, re-uniting the immense ruin of mankind, makes it fast to the anchor of the *Future*, which is from henceforward a light-house, a compass of hope for us, as it will hereafter be a haven of happiness for all the children of Adam !

Oh ! in what a circle of error, without any practicable issue, are they struggling—they, the

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• Ménage isolé.

standard bearers of political ensigns, who make the restoration of human nature dependant either upon the triumph of some indefinite emblem, which, in proportion to its superannuated existence, is denominated *Order*, *Legitimacy*, or upon the exagitation of a Phrygian cap, which is called *Equality*, *Liberty*, because it imitates some fashion adopted in the costume of the people ! And what is the government—no matter its form—whether absolute or constitutional ; whether a constitutional monarchy, or a constitutional republic ; a republican aristocracy, or a republican democracy, with a hundred other component parts, mixtures, and variations borrowed from history : what government, I repeat, has applied a remedy to the wounds of humanity, and striven to erect into a directing law the natural impulse of the desires, the passions, and wants of all ? Has any such government ever existed ? In trying to become such would it have had the means unless the psychological discovery of desires proportioned to destiny had been made ?

This is sufficient to arrive at the conclusion, that **Social Regeneration**, that is to say, the realization of destinies, is unconnected with forms of government, and still less with political parties. The realization of destinies, or the new **Social Order**, which its author denominates **HARMONY**, as it operates by a system of passionate series, (which abol-

ishes distinct and isolated households, solitary and piecemeal industry, and creates association,) so by means of the sublime discovery of rendering labour attractive, the groupings and series are sufficient of themselves to provide every thing necessary for their wants, and a superfluity besides. Labour, that curse and scourge which has weighed down man since his historical existence,\* now loses all that it has of repulsive, becomes a universal passion, is sought for, with ambition and joy, by rich and poor, by women, children, and old age: it is the grand festival of human nature, and idleness will become a word in a vocabulary without any definite signification.

Here we have *equality*—produced by labour—better understood and more rational than that spurious political equality which is incessantly in contradiction with the nature of different individuals, and with institutions however democratic they may be. Here is *liberty*, which is, in like manner, the offspring of labour, and not a derisive illusion; for, how can ye who are poor, take advantage of your liberty to evade submitting yourselves to a laborious toil contrary to your tastes without incurring the risk of exposing your family and yourself to starvation? But in the new Social Order, in availing yourself of your liberty not to work, you

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\* "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread." Gen. 3. 19.



deprive yourself, it is true, of a moral pleasure, but you do not jeopardize your existence. You risk nothing but a surplus and excess of felicity, enjoyments, and wealth ; for actual necessities are assured to every one—that is to say, the poorest, as the minimum of subsistence, will be provided with lodging, clothes, and food, proper for the season, the climate, and health ; and he will not be destitute of a decent comfort and certain amusements—and this whether he works or not. On the other hand, if he work, there is no impediment in his path—he can climb to the summit of the ladder. There is, therefore, reason enough to pronounce, that only in the state of *Harmony* is to be found that cherished Liberty which is every where sought after, and no where to be found whether in the Savage or Patriarchal life, in Barbarism or in Civilization, or under any form of government.

Again, there need be no apprehension (as with our economists of civilization) that in *Harmony* there may be more producers than consumers. Labour is inexhaustible: for, wants, being without any limits, will be inexhaustible also ; and it will never happen that a population—what say I? that a single infant of four years old, could be exposed to the hazard of remaining unemployed for four and twenty hours.

These are the miracles that will ensue when labour is rendered attractive by the mechanical process of

passionate series, which (and it is worth repeating it a third time) will supercede all isolated households, and organize association. This is what will destroy universal misery, satisfy all passions, gratify all inclinations, fulfil all ambitions, and reward those modest tempers, which in this subversive world, for want of knowing how to push themselves forward, always remain in the shade, whilst their merit is turned to the profit of inferior minds who have the art of displaying it at second hand to more advantage.

Nevertheless this grand principle of justice will work its way without giving the lie to human nature, according to whose dictates every individual likes to be able to say, "that thing is my property," and of which he cannot bear to be deprived. (The exceptions prove the rule.) It is on this account that the wild dreams of a community of goods, and an agrarian law with an equal partition which dispossesses the wealthy to make every body equally poor, is stigmatized in *Harmony* as an anti-social measure. Thus, *a recognition of individual property* is the first principle of justice in every society that is indissoluble, progressive, consonant with destiny, and homogeneous with God. And this will be much more the case when the association has progressed to the harmonic degree, for then not only individual property is recognised, but all capital is calculated at an augmentation of from three to fourfold of its value, pro-

ducing, consequently, a triple and quadruple interest. So much for financial property—Industry and Talent—Sciences and Arts.

However, this grand idea of justice will be worked out *without falsifying the principles of human nature*, which, as it on the one hand prescribes the emancipation of woman, so it also wills that the slightest breath of impurity should not taint the sanctity of marriage: nor should the most trifling suspicion be excited, nor the most distant equivocal permitted. Husband and wife appertain to each other with a reciprocity of rights. A moral property, therefore, is here indispensable, to guard which inviolate, as many or even more measures are taken than for the protection of financial property. Adultery, by this method, is rendered impossible in the new social order: and even if! . . . it could not be concealed, and such infamy would result from it (no matter which of the sexes were the guilty party) that no body would ever dare to expose himself to it.

And yet, in this fidelity there is no constraint: it is a voluntary check, a submission to which offers only attractions and delights, without adverting to the advantages which ensue from it. For the guarantee of the excellence and durability of harmonic operations (and consequently of their divine nature, and its homogeneity with destiny) does not consist

in prospective advantages alone, but, beyond any other thing, in actual and present pleasure, to which all are borne by *irresistible attraction*. It is this *attraction* which is our single, grand, and universal agent of police; and we may rest assured that the exercise of its functions will never be impeded by riots.

From what I have just advanced about marriage, it ensues that the rights of paternity are ensured and certified to a degree that has never yet been known in any society whatever. Besides it is a happiness without any alloy—a pure enjoyment over which no shade passes, *troubled by no cares for the past*, no cares for the present, and no apprehension for the future.

If the conjugal state attains in *Harmony* such a degree of perfection, it is the same with the other relations between man and woman precedent, or subsequent to marriage, or which exists unconnected with that tie. Every thing there is graduated by such marked and well-defined series, that even the most opposite inclinations find a position there, and are hallowed therein. Every thing there is pure and chaste, as well under the banner of the vestals of Diana, as under those of Uenus Vrania and her offspring Cupid, who, like a heavenly mother or brother, lights the first sparks of genius, charity, and universal love, in the heart of mortals. Moreover, woman

is associated with man in every intellectual and moral culture; and it is the same in physical exercises, so far as the proprieties of sex and strength of body permit. In this is certainly her emancipation.

Thus there is no strange incongruity in human tastes, habits, and passions, which has not its law, and which, like a catch-wheel, does not fit into the play of the general machine, associating itself with its motion, and contributing with every other element to produce the desired effect : just the same as the harmonious and discordant sounds of the musical gamut, when reduced to the generating principle of every possible accord, not only the greater or minor triad produce *harmony*, but richness, variety, modulation, and delight, until they at last result in the perfection of the science, which, without so happy a combination, would be imperfect.

With what has been previously laid down, we have now, for the first time, the favourable juncture and auspicious conditions which alone are capable of bringing about the abolition of every principle of revolution and war ; the establishment of a universal and imperishable peace, and the realization of a Religion which shall be truly catholic, and consist but of one church. This last thought requires a further developement, and shall be adverted to when we have summed up the foregoing considerations.

It has been perceived above, that all political in-

stitutions (observe *all* ! ) in the new social organization fall of themselves, simply because, as they are made for a certain order of things, they cannot sustain themselves when that order no longer subsists. Moreover, six thousand years of history have demonstrated that they are insufficient to satisfy the wants of 99 1-2 hundredths of the human family, notwithstanding their interminable succession of revolutions.

It has also been seen, that labour classified by *passional series* and *groupes* (or united by the laws of attraction) eradicates isolated households, and transforms them into associations; but that far from the loss of individual property resulting therefrom, as at the first glance might appear, labour, as it sharpens their wants to an infinite extent, finds a method of perpetuating itself by its own action, and removes the possibility even of poverty and distress, while it multiplies the capital of proprietors in a triple or fourfold, I might even say, a tenfold proportion, offering unexampled resources, encouragement, and rewards to industry, talent, and genius of every kind, whether in the sciences or fine arts.

The destruction of isolated households would have seemed also to strike a blow at the sanctity of marriage, to render paternity uncertain, and to destroy those gentle and sweet affections which are its fruit. On the contrary, all these ties find guarantees such as no social order recorded by history could ever offer.

Thus *Harmony*, by renewing every thing, provides for every thing; the impoverished man is no longer poor; nay, he is qualified to take his seat at the marriage feast about to be celebrated all over the world. The man of science and of truth—he who has within himself great and generous political passions, and who is warmed with a love for his fellow creatures, revolts against those pretended *legitimacies*, which perpetuate nothing but injustice and exclusive privileges, and wave their levelling axe over every head which overtops the standard measure of imbecility:—it is in *Harmony* only that such a man can find peace, and quell the fever of *Liberty, Equality, and Knowledge*, which have made him their martyr all his life.

For without the *Word*, or permanent revelation, that *desires are proportioned to destinies*, there would be no science of ideas (or metaphysics)—no social science—no science of rights, or duties—no science of legislation, or political economy:—there would not even have been any logic, nor any principle of truth, except that part connected with the mathematics and with the exact sciences generally. All the other branches of knowledge, such as are handed down to us by history, for want of the basis I have announced, must fall and be reconstructed anew. Religion is the only one that remains, which is what will now be developed.

There can only be one Religion, and that Religion cannot be the work of man, such as the tenor of history describes him ; for there would be as many Religions as there have been historical epochs in the transitory gradations of the Savage, the Patriarchal, the Barbarian, and the Civilized stages. And these Religions would be as absurd, anti-human, and contrary to the destinies and to the will of God, as we have witnessed all these historical epochs to have been. Have there not been, then, annals of fanaticism, of blindness, and of blood ? Be it so ; but these were not instigated by Religion. Religion is not the reflection of human nature. He who made human nature *one*, and yet multiform in its several individual characters, has endowed it with the means of attaining its destinies with that multiform variety which circulates in a sphere of unity. Human nature in universal, and harmonious motion, is, in fact, Religion. It is better than the mirror, or solely the synonym of human nature : it is human nature in *operation*, in action. There is the band (*Religio*—a tying together ;) it is the junction of the action or representation of human nature with the object represented. This religion, or the practical principle of human nature, is virtually in the world, has been there ever since the world has rolled through *space* and time : it is the *Word*, or the all-essential cause and condition for which alone we enjoy existence.



*O anima naturaliter Christiana !* (O Soul ! thou art naturally Christian,) has been said, from the very first ages of this era, with a perfection of elegance, a profoundness of truth, and a prophetic knowledge, which ought to be reduced to realization by the societary theory of Charles Fourier. Had Christianity been allowed to take its own course—that beautiful and only religion of destiny!—it would, by degrees, have produced social organization. In fact, it has already effected the abolition of isolated households; thus causing the disappearance of poverty, and introducing liberty and equality, in the social manner as explained above. This was a transit from civilization, or fifth social phasis, and the advent of the sixth, which Fourier denominates *guarantee-ship*; it was looking on to the seventh, or *rough sketchings of sects* by certain relations, and to the eighth, or *Harmony*, by certain others. But of the social *mechanicism* of the first Christian reunions very little has been said, yet this was the original scope and end of the sublime Master: they *always* talk to us of theorems which we must admit, while He only concerned himself about that which we ought to do. And his disciples imitated him faithfully, until governments began to persecute them; for social organization, operating independently of political institutions, the Christian work predominated first, and predominated solely—there was no communion with it

and the state. But as soon as the Emperors laid hold of it, its natural course was paralyzed, its spontaneous impulse was destroyed, and all it acquired was a secondary character under a policy which, to this very day, is altogether pagan—that is to say, exclusively selfish to associated attraction (charity:) Christianity it was that first constructed Society, which budded by degrees in her bosom; afterwards it was the State and not Religion, that made Society: that is to say, it was the State that maintained it as paganism had transmitted it, and as it has been handed down to us. From that time, Christianity, crushed by its partner, the State, which soon became its master, originated no more social works: in exchange for the process it deserted, of which its companion undertook the exclusive management, it was permitted to occupy itself with abstract parts and questions. Thus turned aside from its proper mission, it gave birth to dogmas; and it was no longer a matter of importance what a Christian *should do*, but *how he should believe*. Thus, in place of a progressive movement towards the destinies, there ensued a stagnation in a muddy slough of theological cavillings and chicanery, which were an insult both to reason and the Creator. But in this impertinent conduct, whose madness or blasphemy has not failed to find an advocate, that which has further denaturalized the holiness of the principle, has been to supercede the pursuit of the destinies by the

admission of dogmas. The former is a fact of divine origin and dependence, a fact of conscience, implanted alike in the hearts of the learned and the ignorant, and it is beyond our strength to resist it. The other, whatever may be said of it, is rather a speculation than any thing else, and principally depends upon the intellect, without, however, being always a fact of intelligence. Therefore it is of purely scientific dependence, and it should be banished to the schools to be elaborated and discussed until it be invested with the perspicuity and incontestability of a fact. Instead then, of proposing it to the arbitrement of judges of scholastic questions as a theorem suitable for discussion by reasoning so as to render it acceptable as a fact of intellect, they have endeavoured to impose it upon the conscience as a fact of its jurisdiction; but *fact* has so little to do with it, that every one establishes its formulas according to his taste, and in the wildest and most contradictory styles. This substitution of dogmas for practice, and, besides, this intrusion of dogma into pure belief (*credo*) which should embrace nothing but a profession of practical faith, humanizing, universal, (catholic,) and, lastly, this presumption of so many multiform and spurious creeds, each to be held and taken as the exclusive canon of salvation, are crimes which have been the parents of numberless hosts of others. History will not fail to support me in this.

Nevertheless, after the loss of spontaneous progress, there still remained to Christianity the exercise of a practical work, although this was depending upon the State—and this it has sublimely accomplished—namely, **SACRIFICE**. When it no longer possessed the means of making destinies, it retained the devotedness of the Master, and his tragical end to offer for imitation, until the coming of better times. How many sweet consolations has it breathed into afflicted hearts when, instead of the kingdom of God which it had wished to bring down to the earth, the reign of injustice and oppression prevailed there? How many tear drops has it not wiped away, in the hope of bequeathing to *futurity* the accomplishment of the work it had failed in? It is by the imitation of the devotedness of the Master that, first of all, it obtained the abolition of slavery, then an enfranchisement from servitude, and all that demanded the generous sacrifice of individual selfishness; for, in the subversive world, good and virtue are costly—while, in Harmony, the same qualities, together with devotedness, instead of being matters of sacrifice, are rewards in themselves.

Let those calumniate Christianity who, in this enduring and cheerful sacrifice, see a partnership and complicity with the State!

How badly is Christianity defended, and how ill understood by those Doctors, who take this enduring

and cheerful sacrifice for its final aim, and determine thereby that there is nothing more to be done!

How they deceive themselves, those who, having faith in a futurity of justice on this earth, imagine that, at the same time, it will be necessary to invent a new religion!

Let a person imbue his mind well with this double position—the one *a position of spontaneity*, the other *a position of constraint*: in the first, Christianity, as I have said, frames society; in the latter, it is a beneficent principle in a society already made and bad of itself. Hence it will be perceived logically how two sorts of results are derived from the same principle: one of these will be Christianity, under the constraining law of the subversive world, commanding sacrifice and self-denial; the other will be Christianity under the law of spontaneity, organizing social order.

So far from the system of Christianity being at an end, it has, in fact, scarcely commenced. It must be extricated from the position of a religion of sacrifice, or the religion of a subversive society, which is a conditional, and not an absolute mode of existence: it must be reinstated in its spontaneous progress, which has been checked and suffocated from the time of Constantine to this day; and here we have it, taking up anew its line of march and becoming, as formerly, the universal and harmonious movement to attain the destinies.

At this epoch another glorious victory is reserved for us: no Atheists will exist any longer. It is not by theological syllogisms that such a conversion will be achieved; it will be by a new argument; by the sight of a *fact*, which will become a profound sentiment, in the consciousness of which no one can resist confessing that there is a God. This fact is *Order*; the coincidence of all forces in one scope; the accomplishment of all desires; the revealing of the ends and aims of every existence by means of *Harmony* and *Analogy*.

It is thus, but above all by means of *Harmony* and *Analogy*, that tenets and dogmas shall be divested of every shadow of incomprehensibility, for they will appear in the unspotted clearness of intellect and conscience, always the same, and universally acknowledged both by the wise and the unlearned. Against this *fact*, which is one, all theological disputations cease, all opinions are conciliated; the Church becomes but *one* over the whole surface of the globe; *one* with the human family that is gone, and *one* with that which is to come.

The abuses of religious forms, as well as the prejudices against modes of belief, will be equally dissipated; and it will be seen that, if the right or the fact of the dogmas of religion consists in being *one*, it would be absurd that the form of it should be *one*. Know we not that religion is the reflection, the sy-

nonym of human nature? or rather, that it is human nature in action? Now human nature is doubtlessly *one* in its substance; but it is multiform in its individual types; and therein consists not only the justification of one form in worship—of a form comprehensive and multiplied, which, in its poetical grandeur, embraces all the fine arts, and gives a soaring impulse to them. And let particular attention be paid to this fact; that it is not man who does all this, but God, who wills it to be done.

God manifests himself by his ~~word~~. It is by the Word that we feel the creation, which is the manifestation of God in space and time. Or, in other words, God, out of space and time, is substance; creation, in space and in time, is the form. God, the light; the creation the reflection. God, the force; the creation, the means. God, the power; the creation the act. God the conception and the knowledge; creation the art; that good word *Art*, by which is signified Poetry, Love, Religion, the Word.

If then Religion is always the reflection of something (*quid*), this something is substance or essence, and religion is the form.

It is a misconception of the law of God in the creation, and a misunderstanding of the propensity of human nature, which inclines it irresistibly towards

obedience to this law, to sever form from worship, or to confine that form within any limits whatsoever.

The brief exposition which has been presented, has not been given with the presumptuous supposition that it exhibits a full view of the theories of Charles Fourier; it is not even a catalogue of the vast and important matters of which he treats, but only an indication of some of the things which appeared likely to interest at first; to wit, that a new social system was practicable, that property should be destroyed without end, that the property of individuals; where the common should supersede isolated households, and that, notwithstanding, that Paternity and Marriage should find therein securer guarantees than in any other social system that history records; where industry, talent, the sciences and arts should take a flight altogether unknown in former times, and be sheltered from monopoly, selfishness, malice, and injustice, which so frequently destroy genius and every other meritorious quality; where, in fine, for the first time a promise is given, not only that every passion, desire, or want, shall be satisfied, but that this very satisfaction is according to the will of God; that this satisfaction is our destiny; and that without this satisfaction it is impossible to immerge from subversion and constraint, and to enter into order. From thence, that all the passions (jealousy, intrigue, and ambition included) which are so suicidal in sub-



version, become an element of happiness, of progress, of perfection in Harmony. Hence, that Harmony even cannot be realized without their concurrence. Hence that morality, remaining ever the same in its immutable principles, changes altogether in its application. And from thence, that Christianity resumes its spontaneous progress, and accomplishes its *social mission* over the earth.

Such is the sum of the promises and pretensions (assumptions) which we have extracted, at our choice, from the system of *Harmony* to be at once brought forward. We lay stress on the expression *promises and pretensions*, as we are perfectly aware that we have not here given any demonstration of what has been advanced, but merely a succinct exposition, which may in some measure serve as a profession of faith for the disciples of the new science, to whom the demonstrations of the Master are not unknown.

From such demonstrations of the Master will also be deduced a succinct exposition of the mechanical or organic modes, which will serve as a manual for the verification of promises; and our profession of faith will be thereby only rendered the more complete.

